

**Drug Demand
Reduction
Program**

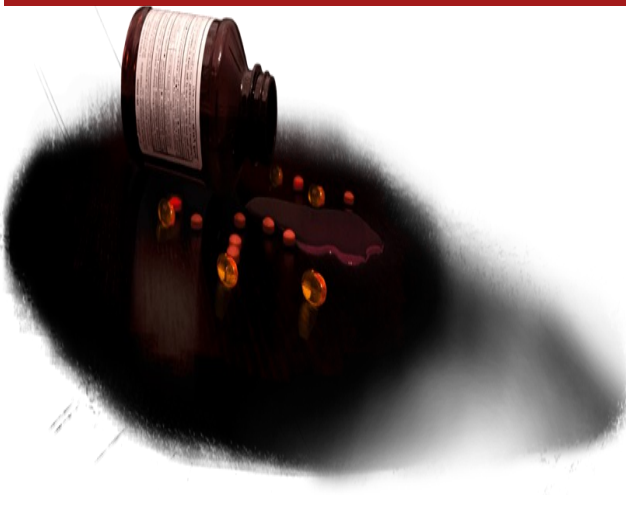
Did You Know?

Dangers of Cough Medicine/ DXM

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What is DXM? At dangerously high doses dextromethorphan can have dissociative effects. Since the 1950s dextromethorphan (DXM) has been used primarily as a safe and effective cough suppressant ingredient and is found in many over-the-counter cough medicines. When taken according to directions, products containing DXM produce few side effects and have a long history of safety and effectiveness.



Unfortunately, some people are abusing DXM by using these medicines at doses that exceed their safe and effective levels – possibly causing serious damage to their bodies. When abused, DXM can cause serious damage. Also, many over-the-counter medications that contain DXM may also contain other ingredients such as antihistamines, analgesics, or decongestants. High doses of these mixtures can significantly increase the harmful effects, and may for example, include potentially fatal liver injury, cardiovascular effects and over-sedation. Cough medicine is also sometimes abused with other drugs, including alcohol, which can cause additional harmful effects.

The effects of DXM abuse vary with the amount taken. Common effects can include confusion, dizziness, double or blurred vision, slurred speech, impaired physical coordination, abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting, rapid heart beat, drowsiness, numbness of fingers and toes, and disorientation. DXM abusers describe different "plateaus" ranging from mild distortions of color and sound to hallucinations, dissociative sensations and loss of motor control.

Can you die from this? Yes, in large enough quantities, DXM can suppress the central nervous system which could directly result in death. Some drugs that people take to get the DXM high also include other ingredients that can interact in your body and can have dangerous consequences. And remember, abusing DXM can cause physical and behavioral effects which can lead to accidents that can result in death.

What does it look like? DXM can be found in cough syrup, gel caps and other formulations that are available without a prescription.

What are the slang terms for DXM? Robo, Skittles, Triple C, Tussin, Dex

Source of Information: DEA; NIDA; SAMSHA